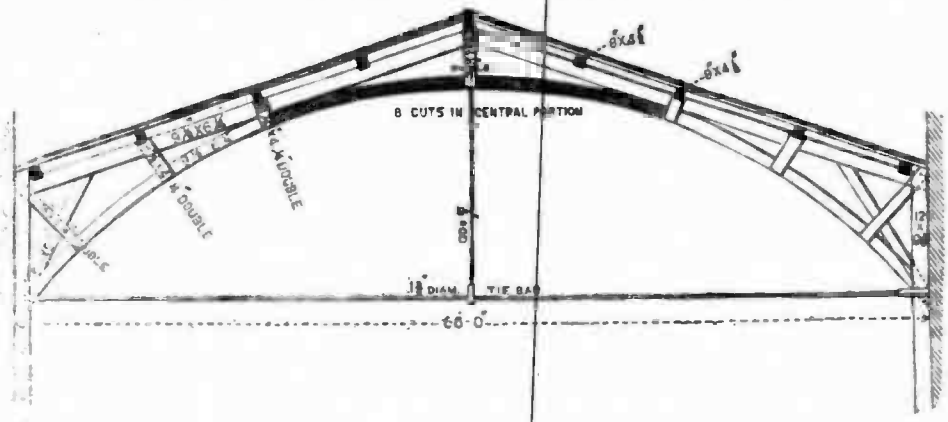
ROOF OVER MERCHANDISE SHED OF THE ROUEN RAILWAY, PARIS.

(SINCE REPLACED BY A WROUGHT-IRON ROOF.)—M. CLAPERON, ENGINEER.



ROOF OVER MERCHANDISE SHED, ROUEN RAILWAY.

THIS roof was erected to cover the portion of the station in the Rue S. Lazare, Paris, devoted to the light goods traffic of the Rouen Railway: it was made independent of the walls, because the St. Germain Company, to whom the whole station belonged, even then contemplated the covering the whole station with a wrought-iron roof,—since done.

The details are sufficiently shown on the drawing; but we may remark, that the plan adopted of running cuts down the centre part of the arched beam is a clumsy substitute for the mode of building up such beams of bent plank. The beam is not so strong; and the whole part of it takes a very irregular curvature. The clipping pieces of the arch and of the principal rafters looked heavy; perhaps stirrups and filling in pieces would have been preferable. The pitch of this roof was too low; the slates blew off very much. The principals were 16 feet apart.

MEDIÆVAL BRICK BUILDINGS IN GERMANY.

THE earliest buildings in which brick appears as the prevailing material date their commencement in the latter part of the twelfth century. But it is not till the end of the thirteenth century that we find any examples of importance, and the style was fully developed during the fourteenth and down to the middle of the fifteenth century.

The earliest examples of this style are, as might be expected, ecclesiastical structures, and the prevailing character of these is simplicity and massiveness. The form of the plan is at first the cross, the choir having a polygonal apse with the aisle continued round it, and sometimes also small chapels spreading beyond; the floor of the choir is considerably raised, and a crypt formed under it; but the transepts were sometimes omitted, retaining the same arrangement of the choir. The best examples of this early style are to be found in the churches of Rive, Odensee, Ringstadt, Roskilde, on Zeeland and the adjoining islands.

In these examples we find the semi-arch, small windows, and many other features of the Romanesque buildings, with which they are nearly coeval, but probably a little later. But by far the greater number of existing examples belong to a later period, as already mentioned, and these exhibit more peculiar features. The plan now presents nave and aisles only; the choir still terminates polygonally, and the aisle is sometimes continued round it; but frequently the aisles are also closed at the east end by a small apsis, and in this case the choir is continued eastward beyond the aisles: the choir is always marked by being raised a few steps. The space between the wide projecting buttresses is sometimes occupied by small chapels, both round the east end and at the sides of the aisles. The towers are, I think, invariably placed at the west end only, and there is most commonly only one, which is embedded in the body of the church, so that the west façade is unbroken, and the tower only shows itself above the roof: in this arrangement buttresses would not have added to the apparent stability. The aisles are of equal height with the nave, or at least the vaulting springs from the same line. The roof is generally in one span over nave and aisles, rendering it a very important feature externally from its necessarily great height: the usual covering is copper. The windows are of narrow proportions, and without transoms; the tracery, where not of stone, is of a very simple and even rude character, though there are exceptions. The doorways are generally small, but deeply recessed, with rich mouldings; porches are not common, but I am able to exhibit one example from the Dom Lübeck. The form of the arches is generally about the equilateral, the pier arches more depressed. The piers are mostly of simple form, as circular or octagonal, with four attached vaulting shafts; but there are examples of a more elaborate composition. The vaulting is generally the simplest form of cross vault, without any wall or ridge ribs: in each compartment, between the transverse ribs, the vault rises domically, so that there can hardly be said to be any ridge at all, as the vertical section through the centre of the vaulting would present somewhat the appearance of a series of irregular-shaped domes; and, probably with a view to lighten the construction, the centre is left as an open eye, round which the moulding of the ribs is continued. In some instances the brickwork of the interior has been simply pointed, and left without any plastering or colouring except in the vaulting; this treatment, though it produces rather a gloomy effect, is perhaps preferable to the indiscriminate whitewash.

Of the exterior, the most striking features are the towers, though usually single, and placed at the centre of the west front. They are of large dimensions, both on plan and in elevation, but of exceedingly simple outline, without buttresses, and with scarcely any ornament but the bands of sunk tracery which divide the different stories. The openings are small, too much so apparently to let out the sound of the bells; some of the smaller of these are therefore occasionally found on the outside, in a kind of balcony. The towers are most commonly square, up to the commencement of the spire, which is octagonal, and constructed of wood covered with copper or lead: the transition is made by gables on the four sides of the tower, but there are some examples where the upper part of the tower itself is octagonal.

The spire is generally more than half the whole height, without any attempt at ornament, and terminates in a simple vane. The form is very taper, and is elegant from its simplicity,—essentially different from the heavy spires of the Romanesque churches on the Rhine, which in construction they resemble.

As the roof is generally continuous over both the nave and choir, the division is marked externally by a kind of lantern, with a small spire, placed on the ridge of the roof; and this is called a roof-rider, a term very expressive in its position, though the saddle is none of the easiest. • • •

The small town of Tangermünde, on the Elbe, contains some very good examples—the Conventual Church and St. Stephen's: in the latter much of the moulded work is in stone. A short distance from this town there is a very interesting example of the early period of the brick style, in the church at Jerichow (before 1200), in which the semi-circular arch is used throughout; there is also a crypt; the cloisters which still remain show this to have been a conventual church. Not far from Tangermünde, in another direction, is situated the ancient capital of the Mark Brandenburg. Stenthal, where there are several fine churches of the brick style (the Dom, St. Mary's, St. James's, and St. Peter's), all on a very large scale. At Brandenburg the Dom affords another example of the earlier period, at least in part. The church of St. Katharine (1401), partakes externally rather of the civil than ecclesiastical character; the façade has a stepped gable. I will only mention further the church of St. Nicolas, at Stralsund (begun 1311), and that of St. Mary, at Stargard, in Pomerania, both of which are stated to be particularly fine examples of the style.

We will now turn to the civil architecture of the brick style, examples of which do not occur till about the latter part of the fourteenth century; and they are generally of a much more elaborate character, with greater subdivision of parts, and more profuse decoration. Among these buildings the town halls, or senate houses, form an important class, but they will hardly admit of any general description; further, the gate towers and other fortifications are very worthy of notice; and, lastly, the private houses, though these do not offer any very great variety. • • •

The treatment of the ornamental parts in this style is peculiar, and well adapted to the material in which they are executed. There is one feature in particular which deserves attention; I mean the introduction of a white plastered ground to relieve the forms of tracery, &c., put over it. This relief by colour is rendered necessary by the dark hue of the material, owing to which the shadow of small projections would not give sufficient relief.

In the early examples of the brick style, the more elaborate parts, including the tracery of the windows and other moulded work, were executed in stone. Horizontal bands of stone were also occasionally introduced, and they have a good effect in tying together the different parts of the composition, besides their value in a constructive point of view. But in the later examples from the end of the fourteenth century, stone is entirely dispensed with, and we find even such parts as crockets and finials executed in brick. The use of dark brown or black glazed bricks was also common during the later period. The character of the mouldings varies of course somewhat in the different periods, being simpler in the earlier, and more elaborately subdivided in the later: delicacy of profile can hardly be expected from

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